PHILLIPS ACADEMY
3 1867 00025 4420

Anno 1778.

PHILLIPS·ACADEMY

OLIVER·WENDELL·HOLMES

LIBRARY

Per ampliora

SONGS OF THE OPEN

SONGS OF THE OPEN

BY GRANTLAND RICE

THE CENTURY CO.
New York & London

26212

Lp

Copyright, 1924, by
THE CENTURY CO.

811
R36

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

CONTENTS

Part I

SONGS OF THE UNFETTERED

	PAGE
A Few Signs	3
The Lucky Ones	5
From the Open	6
The Month of All	8
The Woodland, the Fields and the Lane	10
October Outdoors	12
The Wanderers	13
The Other Side of It	15
The Way of It	16
A Dream of Thanksgiving	18
Clan to Clan	22
Shackleton	24
W. H. Hudson	26
The Blue-Gray Line	28
April Sport	30
Who Could?	32
How to Grow Old	33
More April Madness	35
April's Rim	37
The Marchers	39
So This is April!	40
A Few Lines to April	42

PAGE

Lodgers for the Night 44
Beyond Us 45
Outbound 47
The Challenge 48
Two Places 49
The Last Trail 50
Driftwood 53
Over Lost Trails 56
To a Dream I Left Behind Me 58
Back Home 60
The Turn of the Game 64
Back to Morning 67

Part II

SONGS OF THE UNAFRAID

The Battle Line 71
Handing It Back 73
The Winner 75
Good Luck and Bad 77
Over the Score 79
On Facing Fate 80
What Indeed? 81
Advance Resolutions 83
As for Resolutions in General 84
Getting Set 86
Passing Reflections 88
A Philosophy 89
More Philosophy 91
The Conqueror 92
The New Road 94
Up Hill 96

PAGE
Breaker and Maker 98
Song of the Unafraid 100
The Song of Fighting Souls 102
Let's Go 104

Part III

SONGS OF SPORT

To Sport and Spring 109
Heroes 111
The Fan Responds 113
Mathewson to Ruth 115
Ancient Springs 117
The Fading Veteran 119
Ghosts 121
To a Recruit 122
By Way of Revery 123
The Heavyweight Jubilee 124
Balm for the Lowly 126
Ex-Champions 128
Wrestling Holds 130
The Knock-Out 132
The Crest of Sport 134
The Big Game 136
The Old Grad at the Game 138
The Old Grad Speaks 140
Cheering, Music and the Player 142
Football's Answer 144
Avast, There! 146
Muscle Memory 147
Caddie Revision 149
Concerning Golf Talk 151

PAGE

The Duffer Interjects 152
The Duffer's Rebuttal 153
The Duffer's Estate 154
Getting the Jump 156
Golf in October 158
The Slight Change 160
The Great What-To-Do 162
As for Tragedies 164
And Sometimes It Happens This Way . . 166
The All-Star Athlete 168
For the Veterans 170
The Veteran's Rebuttal 171

Part IV

SONGS OF SILENT GUNS

How Long Ago— 175
A Marine Comes Home 177
Ghosts of the Argonne 180
The Somme Comes In 182
The Unknown Soldier 185
Summer and Dead Soldiers 189
Memorial Day, May 30, 1921 191
Spring at Montfaucon 194
Armistice Day (Five Years Later) . . . 196
The Doughboy Reflects 199
June Memories 201
Concerning Certain Horses 203
A Pair of Parades 205
The Better Game 207
To a Doughboy 209
To Understand 211
The Six-Inch Speaks 213

PAGE
The Drift Eternal 215
At Dusk in Camp 217
Bingen on the Rhine 219
November 10, 1918 222
The 1st Division Marches 224
Disarmament 226

PART I

SONGS OF THE UNFETTERED

SONGS OF THE OPEN

A FEW SIGNS

There 's a north wind faintly calling, as the first
dead leaves are falling,
Of a stretch of wooded country and our camp
smoke, thin and blue;
And it speaks of quiet places, league on league
from pallid faces,
Where the underbrush is silent till the big moose
crashes through.

All my life gray fate has found me with the
dizzy crowds around me,
Through the stadiums and subways ever wearily
I tramp.
But when north winds come to woo me there 's a
call that whispers to me
Of a solitude that beckons to the glory of the
camp.

And at times along the low bank, far beneath the
mountain's snow bank,
There are trout scales from a breakfast that no
chef might ever know;
With the scent of bacon frying and the first
ducks southward flying
From the bitter snarl of winter to a softer land
below.

And though desk and den may bind me, in my
dreams at least you 'll find me
Where the far pines bend and whisper and the
moss and lichen grow.
And perhaps I 'll slip the tether, with a few good
mates together,
Who will let the old world amble any way it
wants to.

THE LUCKY ONES

Once more their camp smoke, thin and blue,
Goes up to meet the sky;
Once more they sound the moose call
Where the river rushes by;
And you, and I, and one or two
Who know what we have missed
Can only think in envy of
Their far October tryst.

The crowds are thick along the streets
Where through the weary day
Their wistful faces seem to dream
Of something far away;
Of lucky ones who see at dawn
With all its purple blend
A trail that leads through silent woods
Beyond the river's bend.

FROM THE OPEN

Wind-tanned and sun-tanned, down the crowded
street,
Mingling with the millions in the drift of rest-
less feet.
Looking on with startled eyes, as one might read
a book,
Watching pallid faces with their weary, haunted
look.

I could see him looking on in a sort of daze,
Thinking of the open leagues through uncharted
ways,
Turning to the quiet hills, holding all his dreams,
Where the moose and caribou seek the forest
streams.

I could see him shake his head, as he wondered
why

Men should run in crowded packs, where the
walls are high.
Huddled into beaten throngs, broken in by fate,
With the open world outside, just beyond the
gate.

THE MONTH OF ALL

You may take your winters southward,
You may have your golden Junes,
You may have your summer mountains
Or your eastern fog-swept dunes;
But I 'll take the first red ember,
Where the Painter works his will,
When its morning in September,
Or its noon-day in September,
Or its twilight in September,
And the flame is on the hill.

There is orange down the valley,
There is crimson out the lane;
There 's a fleck of purple tinting
Where the maples meet the rain.
For the glow that I remember,
With an everlasting thrill,

Is a morning in September,
Or a noon-time in September,
Or a twilight in September,
When the flame is on the hill.

THE WOODLAND, THE FIELDS AND THE LANE

The woodland has called me again,
The woodland, the fields and the lane;
Out from the highway of men,
Out from the city of pain;
Back to the peace of God's sky,
Back to the open and free,
Back where the roving winds cry
Out through the shadow to me.

The woodland has called me to-day,
The woodland, the fields and the lane;
Out where the road leads away
From the guilt and the greed and the gain;
Out through the sunlight of rest,
On by the far singing streams,
On by the silver-crowned crest
Down the dim valley of dreams.

Into the woodlands that wait,
Off from the turn of the lane,
Purged of the passion and hate,
Clean of all envy and pain,
Clean with the sweet breath of spring,
Swept from the altar of God,
Out where the field echoes ring
Over the emerald sod.

The woodland has called me, and I,
Weary and toiling, would be
Back to the peace of God's sky,
Back in the open and free;
Back—but the prize is at stake,
The bugle has sounded the call,
And, weary and worn, I must take
The sword and the shield from the wall.

OCTOBER OUTDOORS

I 've watched the colors creeping
In all their golden glow.
I 've watched the crimson sweeping
Along the lanes I know.
I 've marked the first red fleck on
The green of yesterday;
The scarlet patches beckon,
And who am I to stay?

My fragile will goes under
Within the city's fold,
When I think of the wonder
That hills and valleys hold.
Let others seek the smartest,
The richest at their ease;
I 'd rather meet the artist
Who paints the maple trees.

THE WANDERERS

There are all the millions who are chained to desk or den,
Those who 've never looked upon the mountain, sea or spar,
Yet of those who 've roamed the world and traveled back again,
There are no adventurers who 've wandered half so far.

Through their dusty panes they 've looked for endless year on year,
Out beyond the Khyber Pass, down below the Horn,
In their dreams they 've known the roads beyond the last frontier,
Tracked the open wilderness, the jungle and the thorn.

In their guarding walls of gray, held to one lone beat,
They have seen the camp smoke as it circled, thin and blue,
And in day dreams down the world, through the crowded street,
They have found the canyons with the rivers tumbling through.

They have heard the whisper of the winds that tramp the glades,
Each one with a secret of the forests or the streams,
And above their weariness the glamour never fades,
As they follow Romany along the road of dreams.

THE OTHER SIDE OF IT

We have had our say of the open way
Where the palm, palmetto and pine trees sway,
Where the sun sinks low on the northern snow
And only the rugged come and go,
Where thin and blue, as the herons fly,
The camp smoke drifts to an open sky.

But there 's still romance and the thrill of chance
Where the city waits with its song and dance;
Where the gunmen ply with an eager eye
Their busy trade as the bullets fly;
Where the hooch you pour down a thirsty throat
May burn its way through an overcoat.

Oh, the city of life, with its toil and strife,
Was once as dull as an old bread knife;
But now it 's rough as the movie stuff
Where the bandits yelp "Lay on, Macduff!"
And we yearn for the peace of the puma's lair,
Of the rattlesnake and the grizzly bear.

THE WAY OF IT

There are roads that lead through valleys where
the grass is soft and green;
There are lanes that lead through morning where
the friendly maples lean;
But for those who face the battle where the far
height holds its thrill
The only goal worth finding
Where the rock-filled road is winding,
Where the heavy burden 's binding,
Is the goal upon a hill.

We may think of life as something that is built
up from a dream;
We may hear old songs that call us where the
shafts of morning stream;
But the storms beyond are waiting for the raw,
unconquered will,

And though hearts and hopes are breaking
As we come to bitter waking,
Yet the only road worth taking
Is the road that leads uphill.

A DREAM OF THANKSGIVING

There 's an old house in a clearing where the smoke winds thin and blue
Over pines that bend and whisper, where the low winds rustle through,
And I hear them calling to me from the fragrance of the loam:
"Don't you know that it 's Thanksgiving and you ought to be at home?"

There are ghosts beneath the maple trees, and one of them is mine;
There are shadows in the clearing beneath the whispering pine
Of the kids that romped together underneath a friendly sky
As they waited for the turkey and the berries and the pie.

There are phantoms in the orchard as the ancient
door swings out,
Where a mother's voice is calling and is an-
swered with a shout,
Where the little circle gathered for the feast
that waited then,
Through the golden days that vanished and will
never come again.

And now from far and far away, beyond the
shadows cast,
I hear again lost voices from a day forever past;
Where from the stubble by the lane the larks
sang, clear and keen,
The reveille of morning when the world was
young and clean.

From far away we saw the lights and followed,
you and I;
From far away we heard the drums and left a
friendly sky;
And now we whisper through the streets or from
a lonely den:

"God grant we have n't lost the road that leads
us back again!"

For the pallid faces haunt us in a land of strife
and fears,
As their weary feet go marching down the hope-
less length of years;
Where above the sullen murmur and the traffic's
endless roar
We can hear lost voices calling from the morning
lanes once more.

Where we still turn to the fragrance of the
harvest and the loam,
Where we hear the bluebirds singing in the
golden air of home,
Or the pine trees bend and whisper as the low
winds rustle through
By an old house in the clearing where the smoke
winds, thin and blue.

So we 'll give our thanks together for the dream
by land and sea

Of the shadows in the clearing from a day that
used to be;
Of an old Thanksgiving morning that has fol-
lowed down the years
Where the pallid faces haunt us in a land of
strife and fears.

CLAN TO CLAN

There 's a voice from the darkness whirled
From the Clan of the Undismayed,
Holding the hate of the world
By the strength of its barricade;
The message of mate to mate,
By city or mountain or stream,
Whispered from gate to gate
Wherever good fellows may dream.

There 's a voice that I wait to hear
That only the Clan can send
On the winds of the dying year,
The message of friend to friend;
Wherever good fellowship stills
The roll of the warring drums,
And over the fir-clad hills
This is the call that comes—

"For a gift, the grip of your hand,
A word that may cheer or guide;
A friendly hail from the band,
Godspeed where the trails divide;
Then on through the sun and rain,
Then on through the wind and snow;
Where is there else to gain?
What is there left to know?

"For a gift, your smile through the gray
Dim dusk of the rover's heather;
'Good Luck,' that you call my way,
Or a friendly beaker together;
Then on through the wind and snow,
Then on through the sun and rain;
What is there else to know?
What is there left to gain?"

SHACKLETON

His journey is over at last, they say,
And his closing trip is done;
But when his body is lifeless clay
The march has only begun;
Down where the southern sea mists roll,
Even the glacier walls
Form no frontier for the restless soul
When the great adventure calls.

Freed from the flesh that fades to dust,
His spirit rides the night,
Wind-blown over the frozen crust
With the southern goal in sight,
Held by the barrier no more
In the crowded inn called Life,
Now a part of the sea-lashed shore
Where the far gales know their strife.

And somewhere he shall meet his mate
By ice pack, wind and foam,
Where the ghost of Scott still battles fate
And brave hearts feel at home.
For "death is a very little thing"
Where lost trails beckon far,
And the unleashed soul at last takes wing
To speed by the final star.

W. H. HUDSON

Birds, trees and flowers that are still untamed,
An autumn twilight by the woods or shore,
All open spaces, wild and unreclaimed,
Have lost some way the ancient glow that flamed
Since their best mate and prophet comes no more.

Here was the spirit of all hills and plains,
The troubadour of wilderness and sky,
A wandering brother of the suns and rains
And all the winds that sang their far refrains
For him alone, before their last good-by.

And yet to-day he still is part of all,
One with the turf he loved that guards him still,
The stray, lost winds at dawn that come to call,
And each wild bird that sings by hedge or wall
Must know his spirit listens from the hill.

And some day when we 've passed the outer gate
To find, at first, dim trails both strange and new,
What greater gain than hear him whisper, "Mate,
Before us now eternal spaces wait
Where we shall see the endless ages through."

THE BLUE-GRAY LINE

Thinner with every passing year,
Fewer at roll call answering "Here!"
There 's a gap where none in Blue replies,
And the sergeant misses a coat of Gray;
While the captain, looking with misty eyes,
Bows his head as he turns away;
None to answer—and he knows why,
As the Blue-Gray line goes marching by.

One by one—from the Blue-Gray toll
The line thins out as the war-drums roll;
One by one—and they march on through
Where Lee and his legions keep the guard;
Where Grant stands by—and a coat of Blue
Rests where the roses crown the sward;
And lost winds blow with a saddened sigh
As the Blue-Gray line goes marching by.

And one day over a new-made mound
The last lone "Taps" of the age will sound.

And the eerie drum taps, sounding far
By vanished camp and lonely beat,
Will bring the end of an old, old war,
Where only ghosts march up the street,
Where only ghosts hear the battle cry
As the Blue-Gray line goes marching by.

APRIL SPORT

There are the hills and there are the valleys,
And there are the running streams;
And there are the rocks where the deep brook rallies
And whirls through a land of dreams;
And I like to look at the young trees growing
Or turn to the wide, blue sky;
And there is n't much else that I feel 's worth knowing
As April 's slipping on by.

Is this spring fever—or what—I wonder?
For all that I know is this:
When the first dogwood turns white out yonder
It 's something I don't dare miss;
For I like to be out where the south wind 's blowing

Down lanes where the wild plum grows;
And there is n't much else that I feel 's worth knowing
As another April goes.

WHO COULD?

I may grow old, perhaps, some day,
But not in April—never!
I may grow old when the sky is gray
And the snow is deep as it bars the way,
And the north wind calls forever;
But I 'll never grow old—though I 'm ninety-two,
As long as an April sky is blue.

I may grow old—perhaps I will—
But not in April—no, sir!
Not when the dogwood brings its thrill
And the wild plum blossoms beneath the hill
And the first soft south winds blow, sir;
Oh, I 'll never grow old—though the years careen,
As long as the April turf is green!

HOW TO GROW OLD

If only through my heart there flows
A tide of spring, blue days and gold,
To match the gray of winter snows
That gather when the year is old—
A breath from morning that I knew
Before the twilight's purple thrust
Across the hills when night is due
And fields are faint with starry dust.

What if the drifting years slip by
In grim parade along time's chart,
Or ghosts of winter blur the sky
If April lingers in the heart?
If one can march through fog and haze
To see the sunlight on the hill
And feel through winter's shadowed days
That spring is calling to him still?

Though age may come in with the tide
And thinning hair, perhaps, is gray,
Young April whistles at my side,
A careless vagabond at play;
I 'll take him with me for a mate
And make him share the growing load
Until we pass the final gate
That opens on another road.

MORE APRIL MADNESS

Wind harps from the south again are singing of the sun,
Singing of a friendly lane a fellow used to know;
Singing of a vanished day when we were twenty-one,
O, so very, very, O, so very long ago.

Here 's another April turn half-way on to May,
Months are only hours now as the years go by;
As we take another breath, winter skies are gray,
Then another April as the seasons fairly fly.

I remember, years ago, springs that used to last,
I remember summers with an almost endless reign;
Now, before I turn around, April days are past,

Where the winter snow again is banked along
the lane.

Let them speak of sprinters in their heavy prose
or rhyme,
Fleet foot lads from Michigan, Harvard, Penn
or Yale;
I 'll hand out the olive to a fellow known as Time.
When you 're passing forty he is swifter than
the gale.

Wind harps from the south again are softer than
a sigh.
Where are all the long, free days a fellow used
to know?
Days that knew no hurry as they drifted idly by,
O, so very, very, O, so very long ago.

APRIL'S RIM

On the edge of April—safe across the snows,
Back into the valley where the dogwood blossom blows;
Just a little waiting, and then a happy band,
We 'll take the way together to the heart of April Land.

On the edge of April winter 's wearing out.
Hear the silver ripples of the river laugh and shout;
Hear the maples whispering softly to the pines,
And forty thousand sparrows making love among the vines.

The tanagers are darting through the sundrifts and the rains,
The mists are getting softer as they rise above the lanes,

The sky is getting bluer and the gray is turning
green,
And there is something friendly in the way the
birches lean.

On the edge of April, hurt, I hear you say,
"April is n't near us where the March winds
stand at bay."
All that I am asking, you who doubt my word,
Just wander out some country lane and ask the
mocking-bird.

THE MARCHERS

The days march by to spring again,
To April lanes that wait beyond,
Where dogwood blossoms in the glen
And old ways call the vagabond;
The days march onward as we go,
Full ankle deep through April snow.

The weeks march by to May again,
Where youth is riding down the world,
Where each rare spirit leaves its den
To find the far blue sky unfurled;
The weeks march on to some old dream
By winding road or singing stream.

The years march by—but not to spring;
With endless tread they come and go;
The summer moons have taken wing
To twilight and the winter's snow;
The years march to the setting sun,
Where spring and winter are as one.

SO THIS IS APRIL!

April of the laughing eyes, April of the storms,
April of the mashie shot pitched against the pin;
April of the two-base hit, where the clamor forms
When the blighted umpire starts the same old din:
Think how long we 've waited
All the winter through,
Till the snows abated
And the sky was blue;
All the lonesome hours
Where the world was gray,
For the silver showers
And the early flowers
Bordering your day!

April of the silver dew, April of the clouds,
April of the brassie shot played upon the line;

April of the "Batter up!" and the storming
crowds
Yelping for the winning hit at the ancient
shrine;
We have seen you coming
Far across the snows,
Where the bees were humming
And the south wind blows;
When the gales were squalling
Black across the moors,
And the snows were falling,
We have heard you calling:
"Come on out of doors!"

A FEW LINES TO APRIL

So this is April—how are you?
And all the little Aprils, too?

April, where the blossoms flit,
April, of the two-base hit,
April, where the wild fanatic
Rises with exultant scream
When the shortstop grows erratic—
If he 's on the Other Team.

April, where the song birds twit,
April of the sand-filled pit,
April, where the raging Duffer,
Planted in some bunkered spot,
Starts to suffer and to suffer
As the niblick blade grows hot.

April, where the sunbeams sit,
Where all nature throws a fit,

April, where the winging swallows
Circle o'er the purple moors—
April, where the hills and hollows
Beckon to the Great Out Doors!

So this is April—how are you?
And how is Mr. April, too?

LODGERS FOR THE NIGHT

Since we are lodgers for the night,
  At this old Wayside Inn called Earth,
Where by to-morrow we shall leave
  Upon some new road's endless girth—

I often wonder why we have,
  Amid the clash of brain and brawn,
So little time for fellowship,
  Before we leave the Inn at dawn.

How little time we take to see
  Beyond the old Inn's window panes
The star-dust faint upon the fields,
  The trees that whisper down the lanes—

In place of which we give our dreams
  To fame and rank of little worth,
We who are lodgers for the night
  At this old Wayside Inn called Earth.

BEYOND US

There must be fields beyond us
As fair as we have known,
Fields where the flames of autumn
By gentler winds are blown;
Fields where the snows of winter
Lie just as white and clean,
Fields where the sweep of summer
Is just as deep a green.

There must be fields beyond us,
Beyond this wayside inn
Of life as we have known it,
With all its care and sin,
Where one can find new glory
Unmarked by greed or shame,
Where one can find clean honor
Surpassing wealth and fame.

Somewhere beyond the skyline
That crowns our waning day,
Beyond the low, green border
That holds our flesh at bay,
Beyond dim hills at twilight
Where star-swept rivers flow,
There must be fairer highways
For restless feet to know.

Suppose the road is rock bound,
The seas are swept by gales,
What bold heart fears the daring
Of far, uncharted trails?
And if beyond the silence
No ghostly shadows creep,
Thank God, beyond the tumult
There 'll be eternal sleep.

OUTBOUND

There were inns by the way—there were hands
that beckoned—
There were voices calling, as I passed by;
And I would have stopped for an idle moment
But the road was long and the sun was high.

I would have stopped—but the road was endless,
And the way I followed was strange and new;
For I 'd been dead since the early morning
And I wanted to find a friend or two.

THE CHALLENGE

Here is the sum of all philosophy—
To come to that last day when dark is falling,
When dusk is drifting softly from the sky
And last lone winds across the fields are calling,
To know that no more dawns will ever break
In gold and red—the last day now is over—
And then to say: "Here is the road I take
Somewhere through space that calls the endless
rover."

TWO PLACES

There are two places I shall see no more,
No matter where I wander down the world.
By what far country or by what dim shore,
Or by what strange and distant current whirled,
There are two places that will stand for me
As they last seemed from some old memory.

One is a river that I one day thought
Was just as wide and deep as any sea;
An oldtime river, where its low banks caught
The slanting shadows of an ancient tree.
So why should I return to find my dream
Led only to some shallow, muddy stream?

One is a mountain that I thought as high
As any snow-capped Himalayan crest,
Whose lofty summit seemed to pierce the sky,
Unchallenged even by an Everest.
So why return to find the ancient thrill
An upland slope or some bleak, stubby hill?

THE LAST TRAIL

One whisper runs across the world—
"When I come home again";
The last great dream of all unfurled
By street or lonesome den;
Something beyond the flare of fame
That lives by sword or pen,
Beyond the greatness of the game
The ancient torch leaps to a flame—
"When I come home again!"

The shadow falls on sword and shield
Where friendly maples sway;
The starlight faint upon the field
From far and far away;
The wind that whispers through the pine,
Old moonlight on the glen—
Lost fragrance gathered from the vine,
Perhaps remembered eyes that shine
When I come home again.

A lane that leads to friendly hills
Where friendly poplars nod;
An orchard where the sunlight spills
Dim shadows on the sod;
Faint echoes which the winds might blow
From dreams that beckoned then,
And as a ghost from long ago
Perhaps a voice I used to know,
When I come home again.

The years march by as days once passed
When morning ruled the sky;
The gaunt and motley crowds are massed
Wherever one may fly;
And goals that gleamed upon the height
As oak tops crown the fen,
Would fade before the greater light
Of some one—and a moon-swept night
When I come home again.

Somewhere beyond the bitter goad
Of endless strife and gain,
The farm at twilight down the road,
The cabin in the lane;

And yet, since now the hour is late,
And years have slipped my ken,
I wonder how I 'll face my fate
To find Youth missing at the gate
When I come home again?

DRIFTWOOD

We know how far we've wandered from the
dim, old-fashioned highways.
We know how many leagues we've come from
off the beaten way.
We know how many dreams we've lost along
the twisting byways
That we shall never find again this side of
Judgment Day.

We meant to come a little way, as fledglings test
their power,
And then to seek the old home nest around the
nearest turn,
And as we drifted out the road we thought each
passing hour
That we had but to look and see the oldtime
candles burn.

And then, somehow, we lost the road, by hill and heather groping
Along strange paths where heavy mists rolled in like ghostly foam,
And so we stumbled out dim trails, still dreaming and still hoping
That we might find the long lost turn, some day, that wandered home.

Year after year, we've drifted on, bewildered and still seeking
The one-way road to lead us back among the oldtime band,
And when the rain is at the eaves we hear dim voices speaking
Too faint and low across the night for us to understand.

Dim voices blown upon lost winds—and with it all the far light
Of gleams when summer skies were blue and summer days were long;
Of gardens full of ghosts and dreams and roses in the starlight,

With here and there a memory of some forgotten
song.

A few, perhaps, will find the road before the
darkness smothers
The last faint light that waits to show the latch-
key and the mat;
A few will find the lucky turn—and as for all
the others,
We 'll slog along and dream along—and let it go
at that.

OVER LOST TRAILS

Some time, amid the tumult and the throng,
We hear an old, lost song,
A broken strain from one we used to hear
Back in some vanished year,
A melody, borne through the drifting haze
Of life's forgotten days.
The tumult dies around us, strangely thrilled,
With roar of traffic stilled.
Our eyes know mist—our hearts turn back—and then
We dream old dreams again.

Some time, beneath life's new-found, smiling skies,
Remembered perfumes rise;
An incense from the clover or the rose,
Where spring's first south wind blows;
Lost fragrance from old lanes of mignonette

That we cannot forget;
And in the twilight or the dawn we turn
To where old altars burn;
Old altars lighting up the years—and then
Lost voices speak again.

And then, as silent ghosts from memory's tomb,
They come in night's deep gloom;
Gray ghosts, uprisen from the dreamless dead,
They walk with silent tread.
Without excuse, like restless winds of spring
That wander, whispering,
And jeer that we have gone so far away
From what we dreamed one day.
We cry to God as in the silence then
Old wounds gape wide again.

TO A DREAM I LEFT BEHIND ME

I 'm going back again—
Perhaps to find the wraith of something lost,
To miss the contest and the strife of men
And all the game's wild glory, with its cost.
To certain vanished mornings, slashed with gold,
To shadows blown at deep dusk from the hills,
I 'm going back again before I 'm old,
Beyond the field of fortune and its thrills.

I 'm going back some day.
It may be when young April comes again,
Or when June twilights hold their purple sway,
Or when December's snow-drifts sweep the glen.
Or it may be amid the golden flame
Of some far autumn—out beyond the din,
As one who leaves the tempest of the game
To seek the shelter of an ancient inn.

I 'm going back some day,
Through ghosts and shadows of a losing fight
Or cheering crowds that might hold one at bay—
To find, beyond it all, the peaceful night
Of quiet valleys, or some friendly lane
Where one can hear forgotten songs resung
As far, white roads re-echo the refrain
Of April mornings when the world was young.

BACK HOME

The road must turn at last,
The road that leads back home;
Safe through the storms that break,
Lash of the swirling foam;
Where the green couch is fixed
The gray World Mother waits
To welcome each in turn
Back through the ancient gates.

The road must turn at last,
Where friendly maples bend
Over the dreamless sleep
Out at the journey's end;
Over the dreamless sleep,
Deep where the shadows fall,
And from the star-lit night
Only the lost winds call.

* * *

Here is the man all loved,
Yet the great heart is still,
Where the worn hands are crossed,
Under the silent hill;
Where the far crowds are bowed,
And the rain-mist is gray,
Here is the man all loved—
What is there more to say?

Greater than men might know,
When in the bitter fight
He looked through fame's red flare
On to the greater light—
The light of "Peace on Earth,"
But dimly understood,
Where the scarred world might find
Faith in its brotherhood.

Calling her son back home,
Where the last dreams abide
Now the World Mother waits,
With her great arms held wide—
Arms that were built to hold
Children of plain and town,

Each one to find in turn
Rest when the sun goes down.

Rest from the weary years
Under the maple's shade;
Rest from the bitter storms
Where the last phantoms fade;
Rest from the swirl of hate,
Rest from the endless fight,
Where the Last Mother calls
Through the first dusk of night.

Calling as mothers call
Where the dim candle gleams
Children who 've wandered out
From the old nest of dreams;
Children who 've come to fame,
Children who 've lost the path,
Safe in her mighty arms
From the red battle's wrath.

When the dark night is on
Each one can hear her say:
"See—the green couch is fixed

Where the winds kneel to pray;
Here is the rest you 've earned
Under the rose-crowned sod;
Safe in my guarding arms,
Here is the peace of God."

THE TURN OF THE GAME

Little dreamer, in your eyes
I can see the old, old gleam
Where the world of glory lies
Out the happy road of dream;
In your eyes there leaps the flame
Of the future's star-crowned years,
Where the glint and glow of fame
Lights the shadowed night of tears.

Little dreamer, you have heard
Music in the Faraway,
Sweeter than the song of bird
Singing where you dream to-day;
Echo of the bugle call—
Of the rolling drum and fife
Where the troopers storm the walls
In the battle-swirl of life.

Little dreamer, in the white
Of the orchard's drifting snow,
You have seen a fairer light
Than the sun of June can show;
And the blue sky overhead
With its sweep of azure gleam,
Looms all colorless and dead
By the vision of your dream.

Little dreamer, through the haze
I remember dreams as sweet,
Back through many yesterdays
Out the way of weary feet;
Just as you I saw the light
Of the glory-world of gleam,
Led the vanguards of the fight
Over laurelled walls of dream.

Little dreamer, I, too, knew
In the old, old days of truth,
All the dreams that come to you,
All the golden dreams of youth;
But to-day across the years
Looking back from Now and Then,

I, within the night of fears,
Dream that I am back again—

Back beneath the wide, kind sky,
In the orchard, half asleep,
Where the winds come dancing by,
And the summer shadows creep;
Just a little dreamer there,
In my eyes the old, old gleam,
As I wander free from care
Out the happy road of dream.

BACK TO MORNING

Let 's go back to morning from the twilight and
the shadow,
Where the sunrise floods the upland and the
valley winds in blue,
Where the gleam is on the whitethorn and the
lark is in the meadow,
And the flowers by the wayside bend beneath
dawn's silver dew.

We have passed the noon of battle and the gray
dusk gathers over
And the night of doubt hangs heavy in the gloom
of vanished faith;
We turn to lonesome moorlands where the bloom
has left the clover,
And the dreams we knew at sunrise are but
phantoms of a wraith.

But out the road behind us there 's a happy voice, clear calling,
In a song of youth and beauty with a hope of joy and truth,
And a little boy is laughing where the silver light is falling
In a gleam of purple magic on the golden dreams of youth.

The great night swings above us where the shadows peer with pity
Through the leafless branches swaying up above a silent stream,
But the April winds come pleading with a whisper through the city
To come again to morning, if it 's only in a dream.

PART II

SONGS OF THE UNAFRAID

THE BATTLE LINE

Wars may be on again, wars may be over,
So far as the guns are concerned,
But life is a fight—not a dream in the clover,
No matter what road you have turned.
Fate is a party who ducks from the fighter
That faces him squarely and grins,
But, oh, what a wallop he takes at the blighter
Who trembles when trouble begins!
For it 's Trouble that toughens the fiber all through,
The best little trainer the world ever knew.

Perhaps we are through with the lung-burning gases,
On which I am betting no cent;
But even if shrapnel or bursting bomb passes,
There still is the bill for the rent;
There 's poverty, bitterness, worry or sorrow,

To lead a left hook for the glim,
And it may come to-day, or it may come to-morrow,
So you might just as well keep in trim.
And it 's Trouble that strengthens the point of the jaw,
The best little trainer the game ever saw.

HANDING IT BACK

When the battle breaks against you,
And the crowd forgets to cheer—
When the Anvil Chorus echoes
With the essence of a jeer;
When the knockers start their panning
In the knockers' nimble way,
With a rap for all your errors
And a josh upon your play,
There is one quick answer ready
That will nail them on the wing,
There is one reply forthcoming
That will take away the sting;
There is one elastic come-back
That will hold them, as it should:
Make good—old kid—make good.

No matter where you finish
In the mix-up or the row,

There are those among the rabble
Who will pan you, anyhow;
But the entry who is sticking
And delivering the stuff
Can listen to their yapping
As he giggles up his cuff;
The loafer has no come-back
And the quitter no reply,
When the Panvil Chorus echoes
As it will, against the sky;
But there 's one quick answer ready
That will wrap them in a hood:
Make good—old kid—make good.

THE WINNER

The cove who never kids himself,
Who looks at facts without a frown,
Who knows that life is full of knots,
And not a bed of eiderdown—
Who does his stuff against the breaks,
Unmindful of the yapping throng,
With little time for alibis—
Will get along.

The cove who knows the uphill road
Is better training for the fray
Than sliding into quick renown
Along the somewhat softer way—
Who throws self-pity to the gales
And knows that life is mostly fight,
Who chirps, "What of it?" in defeat—
Will do all right.

The bloke who knows the world is rough,
And not a clover bed of rest;
Who takes his fortune as it comes
And promptly counters with his best—
Who slogs along through fogs of doubt,
Fear, pain and envy and despair,
With clear eyes fixed upon the goal—
Will get somewhere.

The bloke who chucks aside pretense
And stands four-square with what he has,
Who still can take a sock or two,
Nor crumble up before the razz—
Who does n't sour on the scrap
Because his luck is badly frayed,
But plays the game out to the turn—
Will make the grade.

GOOD LUCK AND BAD

Good Luck is like a down hill tide
That helps to make an easy start,
Where one may paddle, drift or glide
Without much effort on his part;
But though it takes you to the goal
And brings you in the world's acclaim,
It builds no fibre for your soul
Nor molds you for the rougher game.

Bad luck is like an uphill sweep,
The test of courage and of class,
Where troubles grow and shadows creep
And none except the valiant pass;
Where through raw gales that blow but ill
The entry clings to this lone dream;
The stalwart only stalks the hill—
The gamefish only swims up stream.

If your main wish is but to win
  Let Good Luck help to pull you through,
To know the cheering and the din
  That go where laurel sprigs are due;
But if you wish to build a heart
  That scorns the fickle whims of Fate,
Take Hard Luck for the journey's start
  With rugged Trouble for a mate.

OVER THE SCORE

Who shall say when the game is done
What man lost and what man won?

Who shall say that the victim fought
With smaller courage for his part?
Who shall say that the victor wrought
With braver soul and finer heart?

Who shall say that the gleaming stars,
Radiant on the winner's scroll,
Will shine more brightly than the scars
Of him who fought to a hopeless goal?

Who can say that the score shall tell
All of the story the laurel brings,
Over the myrtle of those who fell
But fought their way to the end of things?

Who shall say when the game is done
What man lost and what man won?

ON FACING FATE

Far be it from me to suggest you keep grinning
When Fate has bestraddled your neck;
Or to say to you—"Smile"—when the other man's winning
And you are three-fourths of a wreck;
The system, or style, is a personal matter,
With which I have nothing to do,
Smile on, if you will—or get mad as a hatter,
But don't let the charge break through.

"The man who can smile" has come in for the praises
Of more than one dealer in junk;
Perhaps I am wrong, but I hold that the phrase is
A meaningless muster of bunk;
For smiling or cursing won't carry you through it
When Fate begins driving at you,
There 's only one answer—there 's nothing else to it,
Don't let the assault break through.

WHAT INDEED?

The road 's a trifle hard ahead;
What of it?
With shadows somewhat thickly spread;
What of it?
Since when has life been turned into
A clover patch where dreams come true?
You 've got hard work to scramble through—
What of it?
You say the luck is breaking tough?
What of it?
The deal 's unfair—the scrap is rough—
What of it?
The top is always on a hill
With many a sharp and sudden spill,
And if the gales are raw and shrill
What of it?
They 've slammed you back at every start?
What of it?

They 've held you to a minor part?
What of it?
Since when, where frowning ramparts barred,
Has any quitter ever starred?
You may be battered, bruised and scarred—
What of it?

ADVANCE RESOLUTIONS

I am hereby resolving, wherever I can,
To put a back-spin on my tongue
When the yearning is present to rise up and pan
Or start in to knocking some cove from the clan,
No matter how old or how young.
I will give him the benefit, first, of the doubt,
For perhaps, after all, he 's a pretty good scout.

I am also resolving, when temptation lurks,
To get up each morning and say
(In regard to a yearning the crowd rarely shirks) :
"Well, mind your own business and see how it works,
Just mind your own business to-day."
It 's more than astonishing, year in and out,
How we 'll butt into things we know nothing about.

AS FOR RESOLUTIONS IN GENERAL

To bother not too greatly (which I seldom ever do)
Over caustic criticism, even though it may be true;
But to ponder it intently, and if the blighter's right,
To give his tip a try instead of looking for a fight.
The Anvil Chorus is n't sweet, and yet I 'd like to say
It 's warned me often from the shoals to find the surer way.

To curb advice I 'd like to give, because I 've never yet
Found any one who liked it or would play it for a bet;
For if I 'm wrong the squawk is loud—and if perchance I 'm right

The cove who did n't take it hardly speaks to
me on sight.
And even if he takes the tip, I 've found upon
the wing
That favors are resented almost more than any-
thing.

To chuck self-pity through the door—for what
great flags are furled
Because I 'm sorry for myself or sour on the
world?
And if I 'm getting sensitive, I hope some sturdy
friend
Will shoot me full of poisoned barbs, and aim at
either end;
For if I jog along the road and do the best I can
Why should I have to bother with the thoughts
of any man?

GETTING SET

When morning brings the end of sleep
I say, "This is my toughest day—
I 'll find the shadows dark and deep,
With raw Fate on the right of way."
So when Misfortune stops and hails
I do not meet him with a curse;
I 'm propped against the roughest gales,
Since I had figured something worse.

I underwrite the loudest crash
That may befall the erring soul,
And if by chance things go to smash,
I 've been in training for the rôle.
But if my path escapes the muck
And I come on a kinder fate,
Or get an even break in luck
I say, "What, ho! But this is great!"

It 's all in how the mind is set,
And so it 's well enough to know
Most days are rainy, dark and wet
Or wind-swept, with a hint of snow;
And if by chance the sun breaks through
To dance among the fading vines
From just one narrow slit of blue,
It 's all the brighter when it shines.

PASSING REFLECTIONS

The longer that I live and see
The brief rewards of skill and power,
The more and more it seems to me
How vain the judgments of the hour.

I 've seen raw luck inscribed as skill,
I 've seen skill wrecked of all its worth
By luck, where, peering from some hill,
I heard Fate laughing in its mirth.

I 've lost to luck, I 've won by luck,
As any other cove has done—
To hear again the ancient muck,
The same old yawp, "The best man won."

All those who ride the skyline heights
Are targets for a surer aim,
But those who dwell on lower flights
Have more fun often in the game.

A PHILOSOPHY

This, then, is the main idea I hold—
Existence, where it can, holds each at bay;
It may be heat or hunger, pain or cold,
But there is always something in the way
That each must batter down to reach the goal
Which does not lead to any flare or flame,
But say—a certain hardiness of soul
That does not fear the rigor of the game.

I, too, would like to dream of pleasant ease,
Of soft and gentle living, free of ills,
And yet I know, beyond the summer trees,
The storms of winter hurry through the hills.
I know how hard the hand of fate can fall
On those too safely sheltered from all pain,
Too long unscarred to stand and take it all
And then drive through to find some greater gain.

I know the storm may break in sullen mood
Where there may be no shelter in the vale,
Except the strong, wide roof of fortitude
That turns aside the lightning and the gale;
And if my share of trouble is too light,
While I, too long, walk over rockless ground,
I know some day that I must face the fight
Too poorly trained to last beyond a round.

MORE PHILOSOPHY

There was a time I liked the brilliant glow
Of untamed courage as it ripped along,
That charged headlong upon the waiting foe
With all the dash and fury of the strong,
Mindless of poise, that could not bear to wait,
But left the final issue up to fate.

But now I rather like the lesser flame
Of one who stands serene before the storm,
Unmindful of the raw breaks of the game
That follow lack of touch or shift of form;
Where one remains, although his soul is flayed,
Cool, undisturbed and always unafraid.

THE CONQUEROR

Here I shall wait
To meet the rush of some relentless fate,
Content to know that I will be supreme
Against the bitter sword that life may wave;
Where I will hold to one eternal dream
Of valor riding roughshod to the grave.

Here I shall stand
Against misfortune, with its crushing hand,
And, though it crowd me to the lowest pit
Where I may see no starlight in the sky,
Yet I shall struggle upward, bit by bit,
Until I see the white dawn drifting by.

For any soul
The fight is more important than the goal.
Strife, toil and struggle, with their share of pain,
Are winning trainers down the long, hard beat,

And fate, in all its fury, sweeps in vain
Against the soul that marches through defeat.

The game means more
Than any flare of glory from the score;
The dawn is brighter that we see at last
Through shadows blacker than the stain of sin;
And when we know the final fight is past,
What is there left worth while for one to win?

THE NEW ROAD

We 've stumbled over many a rut,
Although the road was as broad as day;
We 've wasted time on the shorter cut
That often leads to the longer way;
We 've growled at luck where we failed to take
The break of the game, with its bitter dart;
We 've stepped aside with the goal at stake,
But—here 's the chance for another start.

We 've skidded along and we 've stalled and quit,
We have bungled the job—and have called it fate;
We 've made ten errors to each clean hit
As Old Doc Time kept cutting the plate;
With the goal ahead, we have looked behind
Or piked along with but half a heart;
We 've lost the track where we charged in blind,
But—here 's the chance for another start.

We 've got our bumps where it hurt the most
As we dug for the grand old alibi,
Or we 've charged head down through the broken host
With never a turn for an old pal's cry;
We 've floundered through many a boggy stew
But old Kid Tempus has done his part,
He has slipped us a leaf that is clean and new,
And here 's the chance for another start.

UP HILL

All roads worth taking lead up hill,
By rough-hewn rock for weary feet,
Through fog and mist, where sudden spill
May leave the journey incomplete;
No flowered path leads to the height,
Bereft of heartache and of fears,
Where haunting ghosts by day and night
Lurk in the shadows of the years.

Upon the crest against the sky
The eagle looks into the sun.
But human wings that upward fly
Are built of courage, finely spun—
Courage to grope across defeat
And find the light beyond the gate;
Courage at last to rise and meet
The blasting bitterness of fate.

Gaunt hands reach out to bar the way
Where envy, greed and hate stand by,
And golden dreams turn sodden gray
Where only shadows meet the eye.
By starless fields of scourge and blight
The seeker some day finds the thrill
Who knows, in groping for the light,
All roads worth taking lead up hill.

BREAKER AND MAKER

Fate called a quitter from the crowd
And barred his pathway to success;
At each new blow he wailed aloud,
Or faltered in the daily stress;
And step by step fate dragged him low,
The easier each passing day,
And yet he struck no counter blow,
Or ever upward fought his way.

And at the end he cursed the fate
That drove him to such bitter state.

Fate picked a fighter from the throng
And barred his pathway to the goal;
At each new blow, with purpose strong,
He fought with ever braver soul;
And step by step he bore fate back,
The easier each passing day,

And soon before the stout attack
Fate passed on, beaten, from his way.

And at the end he blessed fate's whim
That helped to make a man of him.

SONG OF THE UNAFRAID

There may be mist and fog about,
There may be sudden turns—and doubt—
There may be ghosts who stand at bay
Where shadows shut the stars away;
But this enlivens life's romance
For those who like a sporting chance,
Quite willing at to-morrow's sun
To face whatever Fate has spun.

The fairway beckons, green and straight,
But still the pits and bunkers wait,
And no one knows just where the ball
Upon its wayward flight may fall.
And who should care an awful lot,
Where time permits another shot,
With surer grip and firmer stance,
To gamble on the sporting chance?

The harbor flames with shining sails,
But just beyond, the roaring gales
Call to the bolder, braver crew
Who dare to see the journey through;
Who know that life is something more
Than dreaming on a sunlit shore;
Where they shall find through storm and flame
The thrill and glory of the game.

THE SONG OF FIGHTING SOULS

The whip of fate has harried us along the crowded highways,
Has barred the upland from our march where fogs and mists were rife;
And circumstance has held us back along the swarming byways
Where some of us with bolder front and some with calm and shy ways
Have found the thrill in fighting back against the odds of life.

We 've never known the sunny vales where golden dreams were calling,
Where life is like a silken touch upon a satin skin,
But we have had to drive roughshod where broken faiths were falling,
Through shattered hopes across the road, through bitterness appalling,

And keep our eyes upon the goal we hoped some
day to win.

We 've never known the ways of ease amid the
summer clover;
Grim-eyed across the barren lands with trouble
for a mate,
We 've only heard the sounding drums, as far
winds seek the rover,
"There are the guarded walls ahead, so on to
them—and over,"
And through the years we 've slogged along until
we reached the gate.

What have we gathered, worth our while, with
little help to borrow?
We 've found the thrill of fighting fate, the
strength that comes from pain,
We 've put steel sinews in our flesh to meet each
new tomorrow,
Rare hearts beyond all fear of death, the crush-
ing reach of sorrow,
And, after all, along life's road, what is there
more to gain?

LET 'S GO

Yes, let 's go, with a new track ahead of us—
All that we need is the best we have got.
Before Doc Fate picks another instead of us,
One who is willing to open the pot.
All that we need is a sporting chance offered us,
No one can tell what the track has to show;
We 'll take what fate, not what mere men have
proffered us—
Let 's go, mate, let 's go!

Come, let 's go where the new road is leading us,
Out through the mists that have hidden our fate;
We 'll take the gamble where raw life is speeding us;
Chance taking wanderers out through the gate!
Maybe we 'll get there and maybe we 'll drag a
bit,
Still we can travel whatever winds blow.

Slip out a hand should a fellow pal sag a bit—
Let 's go, mate, let 's go!

Yes, let 's go, to the end of the battle line;
Laggards and shirkers have gathered too thick;
Standing like steers that are tied in the cattle line,
Trying out nothing but new ways to kick.
Why hang around where the new trail is rating you?
Go to it, pal, though all hell 's full of snow.
Out through the mists, where the answer 's awaiting you—
Let 's go, mate, let 's go!

PART III

SONGS OF SPORT

TO SPORT AND SPRING

When I am old, as years are measured,
When winter's snow is on my head,
And all the golden dreams I 've treasured,
Like winter leaves, are brown and dead;
Though I am lost to nimble dancing
Where light-toed feet still hold their fling,
Old age can't wither all romancing
Where I can turn to sport—and spring.

With eyes, perhaps, that see but dimly
The younger generations leap,
That may not see at dusk how grimly
The long, gray twilight shadows creep,
Though gray and bent I still will follow
The flight of youth on silver wing;
By track and field, by hill and hollow,
I 'll know the lure of sport and spring.

When one is close to youth and playtime
The passing years may take no toll,
And one can find that dreams of Maytime
Shut out life's winter from the soul.
What if old age from off the byway
Paints shadows on December's chart?
Where sport and spring call out the highway
Eternal April holds the heart.

HEROES

She spoke of Alexander as an eminent commander,
And showed 'em how this muck-a-muck was always on the job;
But freckled Micky Horner, blinking over in the corner,
Dreamed of Cobb.
She praised the late J. Cæsar as a keen, artistic geezer,
Whose work in war and art and peace was still a lasting truth;
But little Tim O'Grady, though his eyes were on the lady,
Thought of Ruth.
She lauded Mr. Hannibal, the Carthaginian cannibal,
But when she asked young Heinie Schmidt who made the Romans dance,

With his brain wheels on the whir, Heinie, looking up at her,
Answered "Chance."
She spoke of Greek and Roman and of horsemen and of bowmen,
Of phalanxes and legions in the mediæval game;
Of Goths and Huns and Vandals and such other early scandals
Known to fame.
But young Timothy O'Toole, as he cantered home from school,
Lost but little time forgetting what he termed a bunch of dubs,
As he doped the playing science of the Reds and Yanks and Giants
And the Cubs.

THE FAN RESPONDS

Temples of Art—you can take 'em or lose 'em—
Writers of novels that lead to romance—
We have n't time at the moment to use 'em—
What do we care for the gods of finance?
Out of young April a new thrill is coming,
Born of the struggle that graces the pit.
Greatest of melodies—roaring and strumming—
Give us the song of the game-winning hit!

Artists and writers and famous physicians,
Owners of trusts, will you kindly stand by,
While you are chanting of world-saving missions,
All that we ask is the Walloping Eye.
Drama? It 's there where the Bambino rages.
Art? It abounds where the Speakers may flit.
Here comes the lyrical gift of the ages—
Give us the song of the game-winning hit!

Here is the quiver where pulses are jumping
In the first dash for the far-away wire;
Here is the fever where red blood is pumping,
Thrills through the channels where veins are on
fire.
Start back with Homer and leap to to-morrow,
What do we care where the masters may sit?
Here is the melody drowning our sorrow—
Give us the song of the game-winning hit!

MATHEWSON TO RUTH

(After the manner of William Ernest Henley.)

Or ever the lost years went their rounds
  From Gotham to the Hub,
I was a star at the Polo Grounds
  And you were a Bush League Dub.

And thousands came from far and near
  To watch my Fade-away,
To mark my Fast One hop and veer
  In many a bitter fray,
To greet me with a ringing cheer
  In some lost yesterday.

And a myriad suns have gone their rounds;
  Aye, there is the bitter rub,
Since I was a star at the Polo Grounds
  And you were a Bush League Dub!

And so today you rise and shine
To hold the open view;
For one by one we leave the line
To make way for the new;
The Attaboys that once were mine
Now all belong to you.

"Or ever the knightly years were gone——"
(So would the ancients rave)
"I was a King in Babylon
And you were a Christian Slave."

ANCIENT SPRINGS

The ancients thought the world was flat,
And they were almost right, at that;
For think of what it must have meant,
As Spring came bounding from its tent,
Where not a fellow ever heard
The welkin echo, "Safe at third!"
Where no one ever knew the thrill
Of "Babe" Ruth leaning on the pill,
Or Frank Frisch scudding through the sun
To carry out the Hit and Run.

And when the sun steamed up a bit
No Duffer faced the yawning pit,
To mutter grimly in his pride,
"Just watch this baby take a ride!"
Nor felt the perfect mashie shot
Descend upon the proper spot,

Where, headed for the sunken tin,
The rolling putt dropped coyly in.
No wonder, with a break like that,
The ancients thought the world was flat.

THE FADING VETERAN

One who has lived in sunlight all his days
Will find the shadows blacker as they creep;
One who has heard great crowds applaud his plays
Will find the silence of the bush league deep;
One who has climbed to fame through winning years
Must feel the mocking memory of cheers.

Softly he tries his arm to find the truth,
And feels it withered as the aging vine;
Sadly he sees the young steel arms of youth
Zipping the ball upon a dead straight line;
Another year, perhaps, and then, at last,
The haunting ghosts of yesterday swing past.

Fame comes as swiftly as a wind is blown,
And fades as swiftly as it ever came;

And when the cheering that a Star has known
Turns at the mention of another name,
The blow strikes deeper as it hurtles down
Than one might know who never wore the
crown.

GHOSTS

Men have been haunted by nameless shapes,
Haunted by some regret;
Haunted by dreams that could never come true,
Haunted by sin or debt;
But worse than a specter out of the tomb,
Rougher than bitter truth,
Is the phantom that comes to the fading Star,
Haunted by ghosts of youth.

Haunted by fiber that never tired,
Haunted by speed and might,
The mocking voices of vanished youth
Whisper across the fight;
The years take toll in a subtle way,
Wherever the road may turn,
And they spread the secret among the crowd
Which he is the last to learn.

TO A RECRUIT

(A Trifle in the Manner of Mr. Kingsley.)

When all the game is young, lad,
And all the cheers are loud;
When wild acclaim is sprung, lad,
From each exultant crowd;
While still your pulses leap, lad,
Where all the world 's aglow,
Don't drink it in too deep, lad,
For some day you will know.

For when the game is old, lad,
A few brief years away,
You 'll find the crowd is cold, lad,
That cheered you yesterday;
For those who now may show you
A welcome to Fame's Inn
Have only time to know you
As long as you can win.

BY WAY OF REVERY

But yesterday I watched them start,
  Young wonders all in serried row;
By now I 've seen them all depart—
  The years flow faster than we know.

For I remember, young and slim,
  How Matty gathered game by game;
Today how many mention him?
  The years flow faster than all fame.

Where Wagner swung out for his blow—
  Where Larry leaned against the ball—
How swift they were last week or so—
  The years flow faster than them all.

Today, fresh from the corner lot,
  We praise some youngster on the team;
Tomorrow's page will know him not—
  The years flow faster than we dream.

THE HEAVYWEIGHT JUBILEE

Who says the past has vanished far,
Where the Brontosaurus was all the rage?
Who does n't know where the cavemen are
Who followed the spoors of an early age?
You say that the ways of old have fled,
Where mastodons trampled the jungle den:
But hark to the dinosaurs' thundering tread
And the hairy mammoths are back again!

The world rolls on through trackless space,
Where a thousand years are a day or so;
And we look for the bones of a vanished race
And the jungle giants they used to know.
Why dig in the earth till day is done
Or spade up a dinosaurian glen?
For the mastodons once more seek the sun
And the hairy mammoths are back again!

Here they come, with a romp and roar,
Out from a Paleozoic beat,
Thewed like the aurochs bull once more,
Shaking the earth with their mighty feet.
And Time sits blinking with startled eyes
At ghosts that rise from the Cambrian Fen,
As the mastodons stalk in their ancient guise
And the hairy mammoths are back again.

BALM FOR THE LOWLY

"The heavyweight champion gets little privacy," complained Jack Dempsey. "At times they almost tear off your clothes."—News Item.

O Gentle Reader, you and I
May tap no rival on the chin;
Nor yet a savage fist let fly
At rugged jaws amid the din;
We may not feel upon our head
The weight of Pugdom's ancient crown,
The while our rival waits in bed
Until his features settle down.

O Gentle Reader, we may not
Lash mighty homers out through space,
Unclassified as Kings of Swat
Who flounder on from base to base;
They may not bind upon our dome
The festive olive bough of fame

Because we drove some runner home
And set a record for the game.

But as we wander through the land
No howling mobs meet train or boat;
No souvenir-collecting hand
Is harshly laid on shirt or coat;
And when we yearn to take the air
No long lines wait without the door
To greet us with a noisy blare
Or, wolf-life, try to track our spoor.

Think not that it is envy's cry,
Or that the grapes are turning sour,
But it is something not to fly
To sheltered places every hour;
To saunter to our humble jobs,
With none to bother where we 've eaten,
Nor fight our way through cheering mobs
Who 'll cheer still louder when we 're beaten.

EX-CHAMPIONS

"It 's better to have won and lost
  Than never to have won at all"—
This may be true enough, and yet
  The far heights yield a greater fall;
And when one tumbles from the crest
  Where he once held a golden sway
He carries something in his breast
  That burns the living heart away.

I 've watched them when the fickle crowd
  Arose to give the victor cheers,
The haunted look within their eyes
  That turned back through the vanished years;
The flame that leaped to sudden glow
  To fade within their sullen stare,
As if they, too, had come to know
  How soon the laurel withers there.

I 've watched them as their burning eyes
  Saw ghosts again from yesterday,
Where some new winner reaped the prize
  Which they had known along the way;
"It 's better to have won and lost
  Than never to have won at all"—
But when one comes to pay the cost
  The far heights yield the greater fall.

WRESTLING HOLDS

The Headlock is no way I 'd choose
To try to chase away the blues;
If I was quite depressed and flat
I hardly think I 'd seek a mat
And hire some human bracing-bit
To squeeze my skull until it split.

The Toehold, with its warping trend,
Is not the way I 'd pick to spend
A happy, cheerful afternoon
In January or in June.
While twisted toes may cop the pelf,
I 'd rather wiggle mine myself.

The Scissors may be worth a run,
But I can think of better fun
Than letting Stecher play the snake
Unto my abdomenic ache,

The while he wraps his legs around
My cracking ribs on mat or ground.

Though here and there I strike a scale,
I do not get the wrestler's kale;
But I had rather keep instead
My uncracked toes and ribs and head;
For when through working I prefer
To have my bones just where they were.

THE KNOCK-OUT

. . . "A clean knock-out blow to the chin is painless. One may have visions or even hear birds singing before recovering consciousness."—Scientific report.

Hit me, dear heart, upon the chin;
Massage me in the good old way;
Hit me as if you meant to win
The crown that Dempsey holds today.
For lately I have felt the stab
Of dull routine in endless range;
Yea, I have found existence drab
And I am yearning for a change.

I 'd like to hear the brown thrush pipe
His melody, well known of old;
Out where the blooms of May are ripe
In sprays of scarlet, blue and gold;
I 'd like to watch the rivers run,
Rock-fretted, as they whirl and pass

Between tall cliffs that hide the sun,
Where vagrant shadows streak the grass.

And somewhere out beyond the walls,
With all their driving, hurried bands,
I 'd like to hear the rainbirds call
Through gray days on the meadowlands;
Or, by the marshes and the bog,
Where swallows wheel in restless flight,
I 'd like to hear the fluting frogs
In earnest chorus greet the night.

Soak me, dear heart, upon the jaw,
Unfettered with the block and feint;
Nor let the province of the law
Hold you to any light restraint;
For lately I have felt the lure
Of stream and mountain, bird and bough;
My soul is craving for a cure,
But travel 's too expensive now.

THE CREST OF SPORT

There are some who like the glow of spring,
where after snow-swept fate
Young April dances down the world and opens
up the gate;
Where cleek and mashie leave their sheaths be-
fore the call of "Fore!"
And far and near the grandstands ring against
the rooters' roar.

And there is something in their claim, but when
all 's said and done,
Above the chip shot to the pin, the winning hit
and run,
Above the keen putt curling down, above the
pitcher's balk,
I 'll take mine in the autumn glow and all the
football talk.

And there are some who fancy June above the
glint of spring,
Its starlit skies and women's eyes, and all that
sort of thing;
Where tennis, golf and baseball hold their regal
summer sway
And all the world turns out-of-doors to revel
and to play.

Well, they have something on their side, but take
it up and down,
I seem to get my greatest thrill when leaves are
turning brown,
And when it comes to golden days along the
sportive walk
I 'll take mine in the autumn glow and all the
football talk.

THE BIG GAME

You take the color and flash of the game,
And the human gardens of rose-lip girls,
And all the pageant that waits the call
As the toe drives into the waiting ball

But leave me the halfback's driving might,
The surging lines in a bitter fight,
The sweat and smear of the warring soul
As the tackle opens a two-foot hole;
The roar of the crowds, with their breasts aflame,
The ringing cheers, with their eddying swirls,
The interference, the deadly pass,
The grip and crash of the swirling mass.

For the crowd fades out and the cheers dip low
When the fourth down comes, with a yard to go,
And in the struggle along the field
The battle changes to sword and shield

And the knightly tourneys that used to be
In the golden era of chivalry.

The world grows soft as the years advance
Further and further from sword and lance,
When the caveman, after his morning's fun,
Slew the mammoth and mastodon;
But his ghost at the gridiron calls through space:
"These, too, are worthy to build a race."

THE OLD GRAD AT THE GAME

Here is youth's gleam again,
Unshadowed, wild and free;
Here is the dream again
Of what he used to be;
Here are old plays again,
Called from dim days again,
Hauled from old ways again,
Where shining eyes may see.

Here are the ghosts again
From days that are no more;
Stout-hearted hosts again,
Still piling up the score;
He, too, still hears again
Faint, eerie cheers again,
Blown from the years again
Above the day's wild roar.

Yes, there 's the boy of him
From twenty years ago,
Holding the joy of him,
The joy he used to know;
"On down the sward, now, kid!
Go get that yard, now, kid!
Hey—hit 'em hard, now, kid,
And dive in, fast and low!"

THE OLD GRAD SPEAKS

"The older graduate takes the defeat of his university more seriously than the undergraduate, who may feel just as keen a disappointment for a brief period, but who forgets more quickly."—College exchange.

Where youth still knows its land of plenty
You live where hopes and dreams are strong;
And you are only one and twenty,
Where nothing bothers very long.
And you who quickly drop your sorrows
Or turn your youthful backs on woe,
Have, oh, so many more to-morrows
Than we can ever hope to know.

Fond hope is stronger when it 's vernal,
And for revenge you have the years;
You face a road almost eternal
On which, some day, to vent your cheers.
But drifting on, as gray time mellows

The less elastic point of view,
We say: *"We* used to beat those fellows—
Why can't you win a game or two?"

We brood too much on your omissions?
Well, granted this may be the truth,
And yet through you and your traditions
We keep our only grip on youth.
You hold the land we knew one morning
When all the world was red and gold;
You are the dreams that keep adorning
A day that 's hard and gray and old.

Leave you alone? Just think it over—
For you are what we used to be;
And there are few day-dreams in clover
From forty-odd to sixty-three.
And if you find us over-fretting,
Consider, then, our point of view,
Who envy you your quick forgetting,
And—well—your one and twenty, too.

CHEERING, MUSIC AND THE PLAYER

"Leading football players in action say they rarely hear the cheering or the songs."

"To the legion of the lost ones, to the cohorts of the damned—"
(As a Mr. Rudyard Kipling said before us),
When a halfback, dashing forward, is quite violently slammed,
He has very little thought for any chorus;
When your feet are cut beneath you and your nose is oozing red,
And an added swirl of incidents befall you
As you sail into the ozone and arrive upon your head,
There are not so many voices that enthrall you.

When I was somewhat younger and they handed me the ball,

With the certain ills that bucking then engendered,
I had hazy recollections as I started in to fall
Of the musical potpourri that was rendered;
Undoubtedly rare voices wafted melodies on high
As some vicious rushing tackler had me winging,
But the only turns that met me as I landed on an eye
Were the "Tweet-tweet-tweet" of birds around me singing.

I understand that cheering is to liven up the game
And that music is to pepperize each faction,
But when forty-seven cleated boots are stalking on your frame
It 's a pity you must miss the big attraction;
When a cleat is in your eyeball and a heel is in your ear,
When eleven men are tearing you to tatters,
When a knee is in your stomach and your head is feeling queer,
It 's remarkable how little music matters.

FOOTBALL'S ANSWER

They reform me each new season
As they point to each new fault.
And their hands are turned against me
As they crowd me to the vault.
But amid the growing clamor,
They still know around the clan,
I 'm the soul of college spirit
And the maker of a man.

O, I know I 'm far from perfect
When the autumn leaves turn red,
When the tackle's neck is furrowed
By the half-back's heavy tread;
But you hear them still admitting
As they put me on the pan,
"He 's the soul of college spirit,
And the maker of a man."

Perhaps I 'm overfeatured
In the headline's stirring plea.
Perhaps I 'm more important
Than a mere game ought to be;
But with all the sins they speak of,
And the list is quite a span,
I 'm the soul of college spirit,
And the maker of a man.

AVAST, THERE!

Tear the phone from off the wall,
  Shut my desk and lock the door;
And if any one should call
Let him drop around next fall,
  When the frost is on the moor.
For I 've got a date with April
  With a niblick in my hand,
Where the air is full of language
  And the bunker's full of sand.

Tear the phone down right away;
  And if any one should ring,
If you answer it just say
That I 've gone away to stay
  And I won't be back this spring;
For I 've got a date with April
  And I 'm leaving on the hop,
Where the air is full of language
  When the putts refuse to drop.

MUSCLE MEMORY

(". . . Golf is mainly a matter of muscle memory, where through play or practice the response from each muscle is instinctive, a matter of habit."—From an expert.)

Regardless of its shape or size,
Or any other variation,
I made each muscle memorize
The part best suited for its station.
I taught each one to slice and hook,
To do the stuff that I intended,
From phrases in a copybook
By leading experts recommended.

The ball is teed—the road is clear.
With young hope glowing like an ember,
I whisper in each muscle's ear
"Here goes a hook—do you remember?"
And when I slice one from the lot,

As helpless as a ship that 's sinking,
Some muscle murmurs: "I forgot,
I 'm sorry—but I was n't thinking."

In wrath I 've cursed them to a turn,
Loud epithets I 've kept on raining,
And yet they never seem to learn
In spite of all my careful training.
Just yesterday, through aches and pains,
One snarled at me amid the tussle:
"See here—if I had any brains,
You sap, I would n't be a muscle."

CADDIE REVISION

Curses on thee, little man,
How we put thee on the pan!
Why is it you did n't look
When we socked one to the brook?
Though the brook is broad and deep
Where the rocks and rushes creep,
Yet you should, with X-ray eye,
Have observed the hidden lie.

Curses on thee, little son,
With the bag that weighs a ton,
Where the plodding line of dubs
Take along their sixteen clubs;
Up and down the rolling space
You must always set the pace.
When we foozle to the moat
You must always be the goat.

When the putt is badly grooved,
Why, of course, you must have moved,
When we reach the haystack's lair
You must find the needle there;
When we drive to weeds, waist high,
You provide the alibi;
But without you—holy smoke!—
Golf would simply be a joke.

CONCERNING GOLF TALK

There was a time when I, perchance, did seek
Some golfing friend, to tell him of my score,
How I was hole high with a baffling cleek,
Or laid my spoon shot dead to get a 4.
And then I saw the restless look that came,
Or else a yawn that one but halfway smothers;
Whereat I read the answer, penned in flame,
Each only cares to talk about *HIS* game,
Nor gives a rap what happened to some other's.

There was a day when I began like this:
"I hooked my drive from off the second tee,
And yet, save for a putt I chanced to miss,
I should have sunk the bramble for a 3."
But always marked the restless look of yore,
As if he had no further time to wait—
As much as saying: "Hurry up, you bore!"
For each one only cares about *HIS* score,
Nor gives a tinker's dam about your fate.

THE DUFFER INTERJECTS

I cannot use the Vardon Grip;
I do not pivot at the hip.

My stance is badly out of gear,
My elbow swings above my ear.

I slice and foozle, schlaff and hook,
And always top one to the brook.

I cannot make my feet careen;
I take three putts on every green.

I drop my shoulder—lift my head
And find the bunker's sanded bed.

My brassie shots are worse than tame—
In fact, I 'm always off my game.

But do I worry, fret or stew?
You bet your bally life I do!

THE DUFFER'S REBUTTAL

"To improve your golf game, you must work at golf, not play at it, as most golfers do."—George Duncan.

I stalk all day in the sun and sand
Until my hide peels off;
With a steel-shod niblick in my hand
I slug in the sand filled trough;
I hew my way by swamp and glen,
No stagnant stream I shirk;
I zigzag back and forth again.
Who says this is n't work?

I climb steep hills to find far greens,
I dig deep in the sod;
My spoor leads on through dark ravines
With many a futile prod;
I enter traps above my neck
Where yawning heel-prints lurk,
And when I finish, I 'm a wreck.
Who says this is n't work?

THE DUFFER'S ESTATE

(. . . "All that John T. Ready asks to retain in a voluntary bankruptcy is a set of golf clubs."—News item.)

Take, if you will, my house and lot,
My wicker chair, my humble cot,
Aye, take the table and the bed,
The coverlet above it spread,
The extra suit of clothes I own,
The plates, O court, are yours alone.

But at this sacred corner pause
In spite of justice and of laws.
For there are treasures now a part
Of my unshattered soul and heart,
Tried friends in spite of adverse days
That beckon to the open ways.

Leave me the driver I have used,
The mashie that I 've long abused,

And more than all the mighty aid
From my old niblick's trusty blade;
My spoon, though whippy, warped and old,
Is worth its ten times weight in gold.

Take all I have, but taking, yield
My old companions of the field,
The hills and moors, the far ravines,
The wind and sun, the rolling greens,
Where, though bereft of all I hold,
The way beyond is tinged with gold.

GETTING THE JUMP

As my opponent reached the tee, I turned to him
and said:
"I got to bed at half-past three, and oh, boy,
what a head!
I've felt my eyes begin to burn, and with a
sudden twist
In some way with a sudden turn I sprained my
blinkin' wrist.

"My back is lame, my shoulder sore; my feet
are in a fix,
I'll be surprised if I can score a single hole in
six;
My heart is badly out of gear and I have got
the pip,
I've four large boils beneath my ear and five
upon my hip.

"In fact," I murmured, "I 'm a wreck—a most unlucky pup,
And with this stiffness in my neck, please start me 7 up."
And as in sympathy he throbbed, while taking steady aim,
"I know just how you feel," he sobbed, "because I 've got the same,
And in addition my big toe has suddenly gone lame."

GOLF IN OCTOBER

In this rare month I do not care
Whether my drive is good or not;
Nor where the fickle ball may fare
When I have struck my mashie shot.
For green and gold, or brown and red,
The oaks and maples show their hoods—
I cannot help but lift my head
To see the glory of the woods.

I came upon a dog-leg hole
And saw my untrapped drive careen,
Whereat I strode with buoyant soul
To play my mashie to the green.
But just around the curving bend,
With golden dress and crimson hat,
I saw an oak of autumn blend—
And what was par compared to that?

Why should I look upon the ball
When I can see the flaming trees
Whose radiant branches rise and fall
Before the whisper of the breeze?
The flare of scarlet and of gold
Means more to me than wasted strokes.
For who can put the bunkered fold
Above the glory of the oaks?

THE SLIGHT CHANGE

When old Columbus landed
With his excited crew,
When he was neatly stranded
In fourteen ninety-two,
No wonder he felt lonesome
And almost went insane,
With not a single golf course
From Florida to Maine.

Just think of it! No bunker
Could catch a crooked rap,
And if one's game grew punker
One never found a trap.
And no one stopped to tell you
Of short putts that he blew.
Oh, what a golden era
In fourteen ninety-two!

No bad slice ever rifled
The heart of pleasure then;
No short putt ever stifled
The happiness of men.
No "Out of bounds!" was shouted
By caddies lost to view.
Oh, Time, roll back the curtain
To fourteen ninety-two.

No one was off his game then,
Beneath a blighting pall;
No one took crooked aim then
And lost the costly ball;
No one forgot to pivot,
Pronate or follow through—
Columbus had it on us
In fourteen ninety-two.

THE GREAT WHAT-TO-DO

"If you had three eights after the draw, what would you do after some stranger in the game, standing pat, had made his bet?"—Thomas A. Edison.

Long have we pondered this query
Where chip after chip disappears,
Wavering, dubious, very,
Through more than a few passing years.
Sometimes we 've called, to our sorrow;
Sometimes we 've quit, to our shame,
To ponder each stricken to-morrow
How little we 've learned from the game.

If we murmur, "I guess he has got 'em,"
And lay down the hand that we hold,
We observe that our hunch has touched bottom
The while he was bluffing us cold.
If we figure it out he is bluffing,
While into the scrimmage we leap,

We come in at once for a cuffing
To the melody, "Read 'em and weep!"

I have called and I 've quit on occasions,
I have given both systems a try.
And sometimes I 've ducked the abrasions,
And sometimes I 've had to go shy.
But I 'll say in behalf of my clients,
If they care for their shirt or their pants,
Regardless of judgment and science
This is nothing to dope in advance.

AS FOR TRAGEDIES

You speak of tragedies—I 'll give you one—
Rougher than murder is—blacker than sin—
Throwing a shadow that blots out the sun,
Fate's final whirl at a heart-cracking spin.

Four races bungled—and I get a tip—
Surer than graft when the going is good;
I 'll tell the radio this was a pip,
Call it a mop-up and don't knock on wood.

Seven to one is the price that I got,
Seven to one and they drive it to two,
Then eight to five—and I 've got my last spot
Down on the filly that 's pulling me through.

I 've had some cinches—but this is the pet—
Just from the mint without even a scar;
I 've had some pick-ups, but here is a bet
Safer than Liberty bonds under par.

Then they are off—and I turn for one look—
One look 's enough when your eye 's on a ghost—
He had the speed—but he ran for the book—
The dog that I bet on was left at the post.

Speaking of tragedies—I 'm in a trance—
Slip me a dollar or two until fall;
Life 's full of knocks when you dabble with chance,
But "Left at the Post" is the king of them all.

AND SOMETIMES IT HAPPENS THIS WAY

The bully, large and domineering,
Entered the big room with a growl.
And you could see men shrinking, fearing,
When transfixed with the bully's scowl.
The bully had a bullet head,
His neck was large and rough and red.

But wait—there was a quiet stranger
Who watched the bully take his fling.
He may have been a Western ranger,
An office clerk—or anything.
I only know, where plots are laid,
That he was lithe but far outweighed.

And then, as you foresee quite fully,
Serene, determined and at ease,
He lays a stymie for the bully

With "Just a moment, if you please!"
And ducking from the bearlike hug
He lays harsh hands upon the thug.

Unmindful of the drama's notion
With sweep of arm and snap of wrist,
The bully with a fervid motion
Let fly a cannonading fist.
Whereat our hero, out complete,
Heard larks and finches chirp "Tweet—tweet."

There is no moral that I 've treasured
From this, except where facts are massed,
That often where real life is measured
The smaller good man is outclassed.
The race is where the swift belong,
The battle 's sometimes to the strong.

THE ALL STAR ATHLETE

Though I have bucked no football lines this season,
Nor scored a winning touchdown or a goal,
Yet I have proof, supported by clear reason,
To show I 've earned the hero's laurel dole;
Ay, greater than an Eddie Kaw or Gehrke,
Brunner and Cleaves and all these other Stars,
Who through the year, with stride both swift and jerky,
Have gained my ground through all these motor cars.

Thicker and thicker down the streets they 've fenced me,
Turning all corners with a wicked bump;
Swifter and swifter they have massed against me;
Forcing at times a new world's-record jump;

Now I can sidestep, stiff arm, buck and hurdle,
Cutting my way through like a human knife;
Swifter than deer, for where the raw nerves
curdle,
One must grow keener battling for his life.

All through the year I've trained my under-
pinning,
Although at times I've been thrown for a loss;
Millions have charged me, with their swift wheels
spinning,
Trying in vain to plant the double cross,
Yet I've survived, so bring the laurel nearer,
Pass out the olive, with its double span;
Slip me a wreath, the game's best interferer—
In other words, John K. Pedestrian.

FOR THE VETERANS

You may not know again the younger years,
  You may not feel again the ancient thrill,
As step by step you know that twilight nears
  And Time, old thing, refuses to stand still.

You may not feel the keenness of the chase,
  You may not leap to meet the winning run,
You may not stand the swiftness of the pace
  That 's part of morning—and the rising sun.

But you at least can pike along your way
  And hold the stride that 's known your ancient
    tracks,
Matching your brain against the faster way
  Till youth, exultant, quivers, slips—and cracks.

THE VETERAN'S REBUTTAL

The kid may charge with the Sword of Youth
That gleams in the summer sun,
With never a care where the barriers fare
As the last far heights are won—

The kid may charge from the rim of dawn
Where the morning glow is red,
Where the hopes and fears of the distant years
Still wait on the road ahead.

But we have been through the foremost fire,
Steel-wrought by long defeat,
All unafraid when the dream ahead
Fades out on the sullen beat—

We have parried the Sword of Youth too long
With the Blade of the Older Hand,
Serene and cool from the bitter school
That taught us to understand.

The way is long to the top of things
Where the untried soon fade out;
The younger breed may carry the speed,
But the Old Head knows the route.

PART IV

SONGS OF SILENT GUNS

HOW LONG AGO—

Last night, far swept across some ghostly
distance,
I heard a bugle blowing Taps again;
The old, old call of some long lost existence,
Of guns, and tents and army maps again—
Still faint and low
Where summer moonlight gleams
As Pan might blow
A song of singing streams—
How long ago—
How long ago it seems!

From some last camp I heard its echoes linger,
The wailing notes I heard him blow again,
Softer than song from any human singer,
Ashes of dreams that come and go again—
Still faint and low
Where drifting star-dust gleams,

As Pan might blow
  A threnody of dreams,
How long ago—
  How long ago it seems!

A MARINE COMES HOME

(The body of Lieutenant John W. Overton, of Yale, the Marines and Tennessee, killed in action July, 1918, comes again to the home port.)

There is but silence now—and the dark night—
Where once he found the glory of the game,
And knew the golden glamour of the fight
With its brief moment of exalted fame;
There is but honor—and the quiet dust—
Where still the flaming torch rides out the years
Above the battered helmet's gathered rust
And the blurred mist of Sorrow's falling tears.

He has come home again to find old dreams
Beneath the shelter of his native sky,
By friendly hills, lost lanes and singing streams
Where winds, blown out of morning, rustle by
To whisper to him through the guarding pines

That cast deep shadows down the silent glen,
Or call to him through spring's new blossomed vines:
"The guns are still—and you are home again."

One summer morning on the Soissons road,
Leading his men at more than daring pace—
And then the spirit seeks a new abode
To find its freedom in eternal space;
Here the great runner fell, as he had starred,
In other days when he had worn the Blue,
Always in front, until with body scarred,
He sent his soul to see the last charge through.

We ponder for a moment, then forget;
Life rushes by above the fading dust;
New dawns break through, new suns in splendor set,
And yet the helmet with its growing rust,
The automatic and the service cross,
The tattered khaki that we once acclaimed
Pay silent tribute to a nation's loss,
Earth-covered ashes where a brave heart flamed.

There is but silence now—and darkness deep—
Where once gay youth walked by with lifted head;
There is but honor—and the rose-crowned sleep
That death sends only to its valiant dead;
There is but honor—is there more to ask
Where one is safely by the last alarms?
When each has finished with his given task
To find the Mighty Mother's guarding arms?

GHOSTS OF THE ARGONNE

You can hear them at night when the moon is hidden;
They sound like the rustle of winter leaves,
Or lone lost winds that arise, unbidden,
Or rain that drips from the forest eaves,
As they glide again from their silent crosses
To meet and talk of their final fight,
Where over the group some stark tree tosses
Its eerie shadow across the night.

If you 'll take some night with its moonless weather,
I know you will reason beyond a doubt
That the rain and the wind and the leaves together
Are making the sounds you will hear about:
The wintry rustle of dead leaves falling,
The whispering wind through the matted glen;

But I can swear it 's a sergeant calling
The ghostly roll of his squad again.

They talk of war and its crimson glory,
And laugh at the trick which Fate has played;
And over and over they tell the story
Of their final charge through the Argonne glade;
But gathering in by hill and hollow
With their ghostly tramp on the rain-soaked loam,
There is one set rule which the clan must follow:
They never speak of returning home.

They whisper still of the rifles' clatter,
The riveting racket machine guns gave,
Until dawn comes and the clan must scatter
As each one glides to his waiting grave;
But here at the end of their last endeavor
However their stark dreams leap the foam
There is one set rule they will keep forever:
"Death to the phantom who speaks of home!"

THE SOMME COMES IN

(Bringing home one thousand six hundred nine bodies from New York's two divisions—the Twenty-seventh and the Seventy-seventh.)

"Some day," they said, "when war is done
And we have wandered back;
When we have earned our share of fun
Beyond the last attack,
As we swing down the Avenue
Some day, amid the din,
We 'll take our place back home with you"—
And now the Somme comes in.

Through Molain's dawn they faced the glow
Of flame and flanking fire;
By swamp and knob to Le Cateau
They cut the bloody wire.
Far out beyond each battered height,
Well worth the cost to win,

They dreamed of home beyond the fight—
And now the Somme comes in.

Beyond each trench they saw once more
The Roaring Forties flare;
They heard above the great guns' roar
The rush of Greeley Square.
To dreams that come with bated breath
On through the bloody loam,
On through the rain-drenched nights of death
The Old Town whispered "Home."

From La Roux Farm they took the ridge
That held the last corral;
Their bodies formed the only bridge
That crossed the Sambre Canal.
By mist-hung swamp and battered hill
The golden vision stayed
Of ancient haunts that beckoned still
Beyond the barricade.

"Thank God," they whispered, "Peace is near,
Peace in the quiet sun;
Peace where the April dawns break clear

Above the last spiked gun.
Thank God, above the sullen roar
Our camp smoke, blue and thin,
Is west-blown to a warless shore"—
And now the Somme comes in.

Once more Taps sounds above their dreams,
And with its ancient glow
Once more the flaming sky-line gleams,
But they will never know.
Back with their love of youth and life,
Lost dreams of play and sport,
Far from the gun-swept plains of strife
Their ship has come to port.

THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

ARMISTICE DAY AT ARLINGTON

"The prayers of the faithful go up to heaven unceasingly."

The wind to-day is full of ghosts with ghostly
bugles blowing.
Where shadows steal across the world, as silent
as the dew.
Where golden youth is yellow dust, by haunted
rivers flowing
Through valleys where the crosses grow, as
harvest wheat is growing.
And only dead men see the line that passes in
review.

The gripping clay once more gives way before
the Mighty Mother
Who waits with everlasting arms to guard her
sleeping sons.

And lonely mates in silent fields call out to one another
The story of an empty grave, where each has lost a brother,
Who takes the long, long trail at last beyond the rusting guns.

Gently the east wind brought him home to meet the south wind sighing,
Softly the north wind breathes his name that none of us may know,
For only those who fell with him, out in the darkness lying,
Can tell his company or rank, and they are unreplying,
As each dreams on through summer dawns or winter's mantling snow.

Nameless—and yet how gallantly he faced the roaring thunder
Where names were less than star-dust as the crashing steel swept by
To take its endless toll of those the night squad spaded under,

Clod upon clod, beneath the sod that time alone may sunder,
Held where the wind-blown grasses stir beneath an alien sky.

He 'll miss, perhaps, the poppy blooms that sway above the clover,
But rose-red wreaths of Arlington bend low above his dreams.
The reveille at dawn is done, the slogging hikes are over,
Where out the friendly lanes of home, a gay and careless rover,
His wild, free spirit seeks the hills and haunts the singing streams.

No more he moves by Meuse or Aisne, some shell-swept river wading,
No marching orders call him from his rough-hewn granite grave.
And when at dusk we hear far off the eerie drum-taps fading,
What hallowed spot holds more than this, with spectral lines parading,

Blood of our blood, dust of our dust, "the ashes
of our brave"?

There will be tears from watching eyes, where
rain and mist are blended,
There will be heartache in the lines where gold-
starred mothers wait.
But where the great shells fall no more, what
vision is more splendid
Than peace along the once-scarred fields, the last
red battle ended,
Peace that he helped to bring again above the
twilight gate?

Let valor's minstrel voices sing his fame for
future pages,
But when the starless darkness comes, and the
long silence creeps,
When blossom mists of spring return, or winter
torrent rages,
Write this above his nameless dust, to last beyond
the ages,
"Safe in the Mighty Mother's arms an Unknown
Soldier sleeps."

SUMMER AND DEAD SOLDIERS

Lost winds from home have found us
  Through fields of poppy stain;
They whisper all around us
  Of lovers in the lane;
Of twilights far behind us
  That held June's ancient vow;
They brought old dreams to find us—
  As if it mattered now.

Our crosses lean together
  With each far wind that blows,
The same in summer weather
  As through the winter snows;
And no one may remember
  The snowdrift or the sun,
Where June and bleak December
  To us are always one.

Yes, summer crowns the mountains
  Where moonlight seeks the plains;
There 's music in the fountains
  That leap to summer rains;
The dogwood blossoms scatter
  Their snowdrift through the glen—
For us it does n't matter,
  And never will again.

For you the rose, entwining,
  May climb the garden wall;
For you soft eyes are shining
  Where summer dusk-winds call;
But what if June has found us
  Who may not even know
If poppies bloom around us,
  Or drifts of winter snow?

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 30, 1921

I can still hear the bugles softly blowing,
The ghostly thunder of remembered guns.
I can still see the crimson poppies glowing
Amid the field where some French river runs,
When down the world low summer winds come creeping,
Where fame still guards the portal of her braves,
And old dreams leave to seek some lost mate sleeping,
Gripped by the clay that molds four million graves.

Roll back the few brief summers intervening,
And most of them were laughing boys at play,
Light-hearted dreamers down the world careening
Through fields of sport across a golden day.
Where are they now, from all their early glory,

Where the last star through somber silence
gleams?
Four million crosses tell their simple story
As the long night drifts in above their dreams.

Some of them came from nearby English
meadows,
Some knew the lanes of Maine and Tennessee,
Mates of the twilight in the last lone shadows,
Closer than brothers ever get to be.
Dust unto dust beneath the summer clover,
Soul unto soul beyond all thought of loss,
They have found peace where all their strife is
over,
Peace in the silence of the rain-washed cross.

Season by season they have slept on, dreaming
Maybe of old hikes through the battered loam.
Who knows? Maybe of far lights gleaming
Over old friends, back at a place called Home.
Dust unto dust amid the shell-torn places,
What is the message that a ghost might send—
"We took the road that led from last embraces

To the lone cross that marked the journey's end."

I can still hear the bugles faintly blowing
Taps for the souls that knew their last release;
I can still see the crimson poppies glowing
Amid the fields that held eternal peace.
When down the world low summer winds come creeping,
Where fame still guards the portal of her braves,
And dreams go back to seek some lost mate sleeping
Beneath the sod that knows four million graves.

SPRING AT MONTFAUCON

Spring is back in the world again, where the
April winds are coming,
Where the poppies scramble around our graves,
and the blue cornflowers lean;
And the old gray hill looks down on us, where
the first wild bees are humming,
But we 've forgotten, line on line, what April
days might mean.

Six gray years have known our sleep, dreamless
through all weather,
Where snow and sun to us are one, as time
moves on its way;
Twenty thousand Yankee lads and Dixie lads
together,
Who 've long forgotten any dream from any
April day.

The poppies bloom and fade and die, and bloom
again around us,
The blue cornflowers do the same, where fields
of clover grow,
But where the apple orchards bloom, when April
winds have found us,
They tell us nothing of the dreams we left so
long ago.

Spring is back with its sport again, as the first
low winds come creeping,
Spring is back with its silver rains, spring with
its golden day,
But twenty thousand Yankee lads and Dixie lads
are sleeping,
Where snow and sun to us are one as time moves
on its way.

ARMISTICE DAY (FIVE YEARS LATER)

Death has called: "As you forget them,
Give them back at least one day.
In the dark and silence let them
Know your thoughts are on the way.
Where the Meuse and Marne are flowing,
Where the Ourcq rides down the glen,
Let them start the day by knowing
One more glass is raised again!

"You have come to Five Years Later,
But for them time is no more,
As they sleep by pit and crater
On a shadow-haunted shore;
All they ask is one day charted
From the seasons' endless flow,
For the dead are simple-hearted—
I am Death, and I should know.

"You have tarried in life's tavern
While they came to fading dreams
In the grim, cross-guarded cavern,
By the dim, dusk-haunted streams;
And you see the sunlight leaping
Where they found the end of day,
And the starless night came creeping
As they gave their youth away.

"One more cup—beyond the thunder
Of the guns that reek with rust;
One more pledge to those down under
Where their dreams are deep in dust;
And before you start forgetting
Let no sudden pity glow,
For the dead have no regretting—
I am Death, and I should know.

"They have found the silence dearer
Than the noise of crowded walls;
They have found that peace is nearer
Where the great World Mother calls;
And beyond the last to-morrow
They have found a fairer turn

From the greed and hate and sorrow
Of a breed that will not learn.

"One more cup—to pledge their valor
Where the eagle rules the crag,
Where they faced death's graying pallor
For their country and their flag!
They have found the home light burning
With the gleam of long ago,
And the dead are past all yearning—
I am Death, and I should know."

THE DOUGHBOY REFLECTS

Only six years ago this May?
What are you doing—kidding me?
On the square, do you mean to say
It 's only six years since reveille?
Only six years since I heard the guns
And watched the white puffs in the air,
Back where some strange river runs
Through a country nicknamed "Over There"?

Only six years since gas and shell?
The hikes and the chow and the old tinned goods?
No Man's Land and its touch of hell,
The poppies flaming along the woods?
The rainy nights and the sticky mud?
The tip that dawn meant another show?
Say, it was back around the flood,
More than a thousand years ago.

Once in a while it all comes back
  Like a queer old dream, or a foolish ghost;
The rest in camp, or the day attack,
  Or sentry duty around some post;
The submarine in a rolling sea,
  Steel and flame at the break of day!
Say, it could n't have happened to me,
  Hardly in this life, anyway.

Only six years ago this May?
  The dirty trench and the killing knife?
Tell me, how do you get that way?
  For this was back in another life;
It was only a frazzled dream at that,
  The ghost of a dream that has lost its mate,
The khaki stuff and the old steel hat,
  Now long forgotten and out of date.

JUNE MEMORIES

I know you would n't go back again
For all earth's yellow gold,
Over the same old track again
Through heat and rain and cold,
Slogging on to a new advance
By field and wood and town,
Over the endless roads of France
Where the big pack wore you down.

I know you would n't cheer much again
If war, in its iron grip,
Should reach for you with its clutch again
For a sailing eastbound ship;
To wait for the ration cart in vain
On the edge of a weary tramp,
And then to flop in the mud and rain
With a pup tent for a camp.

But I wonder if ever you miss the thrill
(Where memories hold their tryst)
Where a church spire looms from a distant hill,
Or a field through the morning mist;
The thrill again of the swinging beat
As marching men go by,
The swinging beat of a million feet
Under a far June sky?

The big shell singing down the world,
With the rip of the Eighty-eight,
To roar and crash with an echo hurled
From its twilight song of hate;
But how much better it looks to-day
This side of the crested foam,
Three thousand miles and a year away,
Under the skies of home.

CONCERNING CERTAIN HORSES

They had known the drift of the furrow, the yielding touch of the loam;
They had carried the plow through the wind and sun that came from the hills of home.
The ancient barn and the waiting stall, and the white road leading down
To the dusty square and the fountain there in the heart of a sleepy town.

And then they caught the earthquake, and then they knew the flood,
Hauling the endless caissons on through the endless mud;
Where the great shells roared around them, scattering blood and flame,
But they knew in their souls that the guns must move and they were part of the game.

And so they left the plowshare for the battery's crushing load,

The seventy-fives and the howitzers, over the gutted road;
File by file in the column drift, where one by one they fell,
Hauling chow and guns for the men, into the maw of hell.

And now they are back to the furrow, the yielding touch of the loam;
Back to peace and the quiet sun they knew in the ways of home.
The ancient barn and the waiting stall and the white road leading down
To the dusty square and the fountain there in the heart of a sleepy town.

And I wonder if in their dreaming they ever tread once more
The road that leads by Montfaucon or battered Avicourt?
Or hear the great shells crashing near they knew in other days,
Or drag the caissons through the mud of well remembered ways?

A PAIR OF PARADES

Here they swing in full array along the Avenue;
All equipment spick and span and ready for review;
Marching through the crowded ways along the streets of home,
Just as ancient legions brought their standards back to Rome.

Left—right—left—right—
Pretty soft for you to-night—
Nothing but some food to fight,
When the march is done.

Then I see them in a dream from Flanders to Champagne;
Weary, muddy, wet and worn—slogging through the rain;
Slogging to another dawn, through the muck of France,

Headed for another drive to lead the new
advance.

Route march—douse the light—
Head the column for the height—
Who will see another night
When the line is won?

Here 's the jumping-off place now, ready for the
charge;
Ready when the signal comes with the next
barrage;
Now the mighty thunder rolls where the flashes
wait,
As they swing to meet again the final gift of
fate.

There 's a rollcall on the height,
Crosses to the left and right,
They 'll not be with you to-night
When the march is done.

THE BETTER GAME

They have seen their share of scrapping where
the score is marked with crosses,
And the game is dripping red;
Where the Hun shells sang the story of their
evergrowing losses
As they counted up their dead;
So they face the western skyline where a better
game is calling
As they drive across the foam,
Where the two-base hits are blooming and the
four-foot putts are falling
Near the good old chow of home.

Oh, the reveilles are waning and the hikes are
nearly over
Down the bitter road of fame,
Where spring has whispered to them through
the faint breath of the clover
Of a fairer, cleaner game;

Where the stark dawns of the Argonne and the
mists no more surround them,
As they lay their guns aside,
Headed back among the bleachers with their
ancient clan around them
Yelling, "Slide, you bone-head, slide!"

Where the automatic's silent as the niblick sings
its story
In the bunkers and the pits;
Where there's quite enough excitement and a
longer lasting glory
In the two and three-base hits;
Where the packs are all discarded and the masks
no longer stifle
As they reel across the foam—
Where the bat supplants the cannon and the
mashie ousts the rifle
In the dream of "Home, Sweet Home."

TO A DOUGHBOY

I watched you slog down a dusty pike,
One of many, so much alike,
With a spirit keen as a breath of flame,
Ready to rise and ready to strike
Whenever the fitting moment came;
Just a kid with a boyish grin,
Waiting the order to hustle in
And lend your soul to the battle thrill,
Unafraid of the battle din
Or the guns that crashed from a hidden hill.

I watched you leap to the big advance,
With a smile for Fate and its fighting chance,
Sweeping on till the charge was done;
I saw your grave on a slope of France
Where you fell asleep when the fight was won;
Just a kid, who had earned his rest
With a rifle and helmet above his breast,

Who proved, in answer to German jeers,
That a kid can charge a machine gun nest
Without the training of forty years.

I watched the shadows drifting by
As gray dusk came from a summer's sky,
And lost winds came from beyond the fight,
And I seemed to hear them croon and sigh:
"Sleep, little dreamer, sleep to-night;
Sleep to-night, for I 'm bringing you
A prayer and a dream from the home you knew;
And I 'll take them word of the big advance,
And how you fought till the game was through
And you fell asleep in the dust of France."

TO UNDERSTAND

He saw long lines of khaki form
  In quiet order, clan by clan;
To drive against the blood-red storm
  Of flame and steel beyond their span—
As one might gather for a game
  Of two-base hits or tackle runs—
Until the zero hour came
  Amid the thunder of the guns.

And some looked out with eager eyes,
  Beyond the gathering barrage,
Unmindful of the sacrifice
  Or service of their final charge;
And some with faces drawn and gray
  Stood ready for their final fight,
Still dreaming of a vanished day
  And one who waited through the night.

He saw them forming, row on row,
A line that raw hell could n't stop;
Until, against the dawn's white glow
He saw their bodies clear the top;
And then, across the shattered loam
From smashing shell and shrapnel sent,
As last—three thousand miles from home—
He knew what Flag and Country meant.

THE SIX-INCH SPEAKS

My voice is not Caruso's and I 'm just a trifle loud;
The odds are you can hear me in the midst of any crowd;
My accent is n't pretty when I get the last command,
But I speak the only message that the Hun can understand.

Give me the right deflection and the proper range to boot,
Give me a keen-eyed gunner who is hep to how I shoot;
Give me the ranging angle and before the minute grows
I 'll give the Bosche a lesson in the only gab he knows.

I 'm just a wee bit throaty and perhaps a trifle
hoarse;
My accent is n't soothing and my diction 's some-
what coarse;
I 've never studied grammar and my style is
poorly planned,
But I speak the only language that the Bosche
can understand.

THE DRIFT ETERNAL

There 's a long dull hike down a dusty, crusty road,
And you wonder how they are back home;
There are fifty pounds of packing for an all day load,
And you wonder how they are back home;
There 's a billet may be waiting where the floors are bare,
And a night wind lashes from the raw, damp air,
But you never think about it and you never seem to care,
As you wonder how they are back home.

You 've finished up your ranging with your guns in place,
And you wonder how they are back home;
The ghostly darkness settles and the rain is in your face,

But you wonder how they are back home;
You 've sent along your orders through the shadow and the rain,
And the guns have barked their message to the Hun across the plain,
But the echo 's hardly settled to a breath of a refrain
Till you wonder how they are back home.

AT DUSK IN CAMP

Shadows of years—ghosts of old days—
In endless column they pass, far whirled;
Blown from the drifts of forgotten ways,
And a life I knew in another world;
A world of ease and of softer dreams,
Where fate had furnished the best of it,
Where my tent was pitched by the singing
streams
That sang of home—and the rest of it.

Shadows of years—ghosts of old days—
Shadows and ghosts—in the grip of fate;
Is it only a dream through the winter haze
When the drill is long where the big guns wait?
Did I ever live in a world that knew
The softer dreams, with the home fires lit?
And if I did, and the dream is true,
How many ages ago was it?

Friendly faces I seem to know
Gather out of the mist again,
Only to fade as the bugles blow
And the long line gathers of marching men;
Friendly faces I seem to miss
From the softer years where the old dreams flit;
But if I lived in a world like this—
How many ages ago was it?

BINGEN ON THE RHINE

When I was still a tow-head kid across an ancient spell,
And had to do as I was bid or catch all ballyel—
I can recall with maudlin curse the day I had to rise
And kick in with some foolish verse with terror in my eyes;
"Beneath the Spreading Chestnut Tree"—"The Ride of Paul Revere"—
"Upon a Stern and Rock-bound Coast"—and others just as sere;
But from the list which stands accurst where nightmares still entwine,
The one that I recited first was "Bingen on the Rhine."

Ach Gott! The morning I arose upon the schoolhouse stand,

With pallid cheek and shaking toes and tremors
of the hand;
My heart went up to meet my mouth, my bulging eyes grew dim,
My tongue was drier than a drouth along Sahara's rim;
"A soldier of the legion lay"—and then with
starting tears,
I stopped without a word to say, for I forgot
"Algiers,"
And that 's why heart and soul still burn and
cold chills soak the spine,
Each time my morbid thoughts return to "Bingen on the Rhine."

And now against the Hun's abode with steady
tramp along,
The old Third Army hits the road, two hundred
thousand strong;
As dim dawns from the eastward creep the vanguards down the plain,
They hold their sector of the sweep that started
from Lorraine.

I don't know yet where Bingen stands upon the
bally map,
Nor yet which Allied army lands upon its wait-
ing lap;
But while for war and all its hell I can't say that
I pine,
I 'd like to drop at least one shell in Bingen on
the Rhine.

NOVEMBER 10, 1918

(The Doughboy Speaks.)

We could hear the gray winds whisper
Through each tangled wood and glen,
"If you only live till morning
You will soon be home again;
If you only live till morning
You will find the ancient glow
Where the friendly rivers wander
By the hills you used to know."

We could hear the gray winds calling
As the H. E. ripped the loam:
"If you only live till morning
You will find the skies of home,
You will hear again the voices
Of the clan you know so well;
If you only live till morning
You will soon be out of hell.

"One more day of wreck and terror,
One more night of death and pain;
One more dawn in muddy trenches
Through the shell blast and the rain.
Then it 's through with pack and rifle
And the long hike through the glen—
If you only live till morning
You will soon be home again."

THE 1ST DIVISION MARCHES

The last to leave—the first to go—
So is their laurel wrought;
And now they march back home, below
The skies for which they fought;
The skies of home which shed their blue
Upon the steel-shod clan,
The same blue steel that swept them through
Cantigny to Sedan.

Not all of them—Somewhere in France,
Beyond the mist-hung shore,
Stained crosses mark the last advance
Of those who come no more;
In Soissons drifts—by Argonne streams,
Or Cheppy's wooded glen,
Beneath his helmet each one dreams
That he is home again.

The gaps are filled—each in his place
Will hear the wild acclaim;
With all the valor of their race,
They played the crimson game;
But when the first gray shadows creep,
Send one prayer on before,
Where rust-red rifles guard the sleep
Of those who come no more.

For those who march will turn to find
Some ghostly mate in vain;
Some buddy who was left behind
To face the winter rain;
And spring shall bring "blue days and fair"
Where star dust crowns their night;
But they shall neither know nor care
Who holds Valhalla's height!

DISARMAMENT

I wonder what they think of, when gray ghosts
get together,
The ones who fought to end all war and found
the wooden cross?
Whose bodies hold the ground they won, un-
mindful of the weather,
Where rain and sun to them are one, beyond the
touch of loss?

I wonder what their vote would be when, just as
dusk is falling,
Their ghostly dreams go back again to lanes they
knew of old?
Or out the path they hear again remembered
voices calling
From those who come their way no more as time
goes by untold?

Perhaps it does n't matter now where, safe beyond all sorrow,
They hold their brave and simple rest bereft of haunting care,
Out where their ghosts can only see a golden, far to-morrow,
That waits beyond the twilight road where only dreamers fare.

Perhaps. But if they had the chance to see remembered faces,
To hear old voices calling them through autumn's hazy suns,
Or walk unbroken through the years amid old-fashioned places,
I wonder if their vote would be in favor of the guns?

DATE DUE

26212

811
R36